

Mr. MACDONALD. We are happy to have as our first witness today Mr. Robert E. Lee, member of the Federal Communications Commission.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT E. LEE, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION; ACCOMPANIED BY JULIAN T. DIXON, ASSISTANT CHIEF ENGINEER, OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER

Mr. LEE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have about a 15-minute statement. If you don't mind, I will read it or shorten it, as you wish.

Mr. MACDONALD. All right.

Mr. LEE. I am Robert E. Lee, a member of the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. Chairman, the Commission appreciates very much your kindness in holding hearings this morning on these bills and I appreciate this opportunity to present the Commission's views.

H.R. 14910 was introduced by the chairman of your parent committee at the Commission's request, and H.R. 9665 was introduced by Mr. Dingell, a member of the full committee. These bills, which are identical to S. 1015, 89th Congress, as passed by the Senate on June 2, 1966, represent the most important proposal on the Commission's legislative program for the 90th Congress. Their enactment would contribute most significantly to our efforts to deal with a substantial element of "spectrum pollution."

These bills, with a few exceptions which I will mention later, would give the Commission authority to prescribe regulations for the manufacture, import, sale, offer for sale, shipment, or use of devices which cause harmful interference to radio communications or are capable of causing harmful interference to radio communications, or are capable of causing harmful interference to radio reception. The bills also prohibit the manufacture and other specified dealings in devices which fail to comply with the regulations promulgated by the Commission.

The purpose of this legislation is to give the Commission adequate authority to deal with increasingly acute interference problems arising from the expanding usage of electrical and electronic devices which cause, or are capable of causing, harmful interference to radio reception. This would be accomplished by authorizing the Commission to deal with the interference problem at its root source—the sale by some manufacturers of equipment and apparatus which do not comply with the Commission's rules. It would require that equipment be properly designed to reduce radiation to specified and acceptable limits and, where necessary, permit the Commission to specify to the manufacturer operating frequencies before the equipment is sold to the consumer.

In recent years there has been a marked increase in the number and type of devices capable of causing harmful interference to radio reception. In many instances, radiating devices lie outside the area conventionally associated with radio transmission and reception. They include such devices as high-powered electronic heaters, diathermy machines, and welding devices which radiate energy either purposely or incidentally to carrying out their primary functions.